

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

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FM AMEMBASSY ROME

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0029

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY LOME

UNCLAS ROME 3693

AFDROUGHT

SUBJECT: SHORT-TERM ASSISTANCE NEEDS IN THE SAHEL

REF: A. STATE 016090

1. OSRO ADVISES. DURING FEBRUARY 12-13 MEETINGS IN OSRO ROME WITH KELLY CONSIDERATION WAS GIVEN TO FOLLOWING-UP FEBRUARY 20 RESPONSES TO REFTEL BY OSRO REQUESTING DONOR REPRESENTATIVES MEETING WITH DROUGHT COMMISSIONERS IN COUNTRIES WHERE USAID RESPONSES INDICATED PERSISTENT UNEASINESS AND NEED TO UPDATE MDM RECOMMENDATIONS.

2. THE TONE AND CONTENTS OF VERY USEFUL SERIES OF REPORTS RESULTING FROM REFTEL LEAVE IMPRESSION THAT CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM
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HAS REPLACED NAGGING UNEASINESS . SUBSEQUENT AND RECENT

SERIALS AND PROTECTIVE FOOD DONATIONS UNDER DISCUSSION OR PLEDGE HAVE NOW REACHED TOTAL COUNTRY LEVELS RECOMMENDED BY MDM AND THERE IS SOME ASSURANCE OF A HEALTHY REGIONAL RESERVE. HARVESTS WERE GENERALLY GOOD. 83 OF THE MDM'S RECOMMENDED 86 TRUCKS ARE UNDER SHIPMENT. FOOD DISTRIBUTION AND PREPOSITIONING PLANS WILL UNDOUBTEDLY NEED PUSHING AND SOME HELP BUT ARE GOING AHEAD HOWEVER SLOWLY.

3. NON US DONORS WHO WERE CONSULTED ABOUT POSSIBLE MEETING WITH DROUGHT COMMISSIONERS WERE AGAINST THE IDEA. THE CONSENSUS WAS THAT MDM RECOMMENDED AID WAS ADEQUATE TO MEET THIS YEAR'S NEEDS AND THAT BURDEN WAS NOW ON GOVERNMENTS SHOULDER TO PREPOSITION SUPPLIES, TO PROTECT STOCKS AND TO GIVE FARMERS NECESSARY ENCOURAGEMENT AND INPUTS TO ACHIEVE GOOD HARVESTS FROM EXPECTED RAINS. CONTINUED CONTRIBUTIONS TO OSRO AND DONORS CONTINUED INTEREST IN SAHEL GIVE NO INDICATION OF DONORS HOLDING BACK BECAUSE OF IMPROVING CONDITIONS. ON CONTRARY, THEY STRESS THEIR WILLINGNESS TO MEET JUSTIFIED EMERGENCY NEEDS IF THEY ARISE.

4. THEREFORE, OSRO WILL NOT BE REQUESTING DONOR MEETINGS WITH DROUGHT COMMISSIONERS BUT ANTICIPATES VISITING SOME COUNTRIES TO ASSIST IN STIMULATING GOVERNMENTS RESPONSE TO PREPOSITIONING, FUMIGATION AND PEST CONTROL NEEDS WHEN AND WHERE CONSIDERED USEFUL. MEANWHILE, WE EXHORTING UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVES AND THEIR COLLEAGUES IN FIELD TO PRESS FOR GOVERNMENT ACTIONS OUTLINED ABOVE IN HARMONY WITH USAID AND OTHER DONOR EFFORTS IN SAME DIRECTION. THIS TELEX COPIED TO UNDP RESREPS.VOLPE

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